

OKLA. BAIL FIRM MOVE EXPECTED

Official Says \$200,000 Is
Contested in Court

5-1 8/16/69
Oklahoma Dist. Atty. Curtis P. Harris predicted that Maryland National Insurance Co., Oklahoma's largest bail-bonding company, will stay in that state as long as it can, then leave in debt, an article in the Daily Oklahoman reported.

The firm now owes the state of Oklahoma about \$200,000, Harris said.

The firm "has done the same thing in California and Louisiana and Florida," Harris added. He produced records of part of the company's activities in Louisiana.

Harris said the firm refused to pay forfeited bonds and claimed it was entitled to a jury trial to determine whether it must pay each bond.

Under Oklahoma law, a bond is a conditional promissory note and must be paid immediately on forfeiture.

Maryland National was ordered in district court to pay its outstanding forfeited bonds. The Oklahoma Supreme Court affirmed the decision.

The firm asked the U.S. Supreme Court to rule on the constitutionality of Oklahoma's 1965 bail bond law, a practice Harris said it has followed in other states.

At present Maryland National owes about \$720,000 in bond forfeitures in Louisiana, and the 10 Criminal Court judges here have issued an order prohibiting acceptance of the company's bonds in their court.

Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison has called his failure to collect defaulted bonds from the firm between 1966 and early 1969 the biggest mistake of his seven-year administration.

The firm, with assets of \$3,457,011, does business in 22 states.